

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor



YAAKOV "JAKE" WEISSMANN
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

TITLE: HB1278 Maryland Positive Youth Development Commission and Fund - Establishment

DATE: March 11th 2026

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

POSITION: Letter of Concern

SUMMARY OF BILL: This bill establishes the Maryland Positive Youth Development Commission within the State Department of Education, along with a dedicated funding mechanism to support community-based youth programs. The Commission would award grants to eligible organizations such as nonprofits, local governments, and schools that provide afterschool, before-school, and summer programming designed to build social, emotional, and developmental skills in young people ages birth through 25.

EXPLANATION: The funding for the grants would come primarily from any legal settlements or judgments the State receives from social media companies found to have harmed children and youth. Up to 10% of those funds could go toward litigation costs and administrative expenses, with the remainder directed to grants. The bill is contingent on Maryland actually receiving such settlement money by June 30, 2030. If no settlement funds arrive by that date, the Act becomes null and void

Given forecasted out-year deficits and significant uncertainty surrounding federal budget and policy changes, the State faces considerable challenges in managing new spending commitments. While this bill's funding mechanism is contingent on social media settlement proceeds rather than General Funds, the broader fiscal environment marked by DBM-projected shortfalls beginning in FY 2027 and escalating into FY 2028, compounded by unforeseen federal policy shifts and ongoing budgetary pressures warrants caution when establishing new programs that may ultimately require State support if settlement funds fall short or are delayed.

**For additional information, contact Dana Phillips at
(410) 260-6068 or dana.phillips@maryland.gov**